

56139998-2

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-20, and 25 are pending in the present application. Claims 1, 5, 15, and 25 have been amended, and new claims 26-32 have been added hereby. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added by the present amendment.

The undersigned would like to thank the Examiner for his time and assistance during the telephone conference of January 18, 2006.

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the indication in the Office Action that claims 19 and 20 are allowable. New claims 26 and 28 have been added hereby, with new claims 26 and 28 being similar to claims 19 and 20, respectively, with the addition of the term "directly." Applicants further acknowledge the indication in the Office Action that claims 7-14 and 16 are objected to as allegedly being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants respectfully submit, however, that amended independent claims 1 and 15 are allowable for at least the reasons set forth below, thereby rendering dependent claims 7-14 and 16 allowable as well.

- 15 -

NYCDMS/9821342

56139998-2

Claims 5 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1-5 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Japanese Patent Document No. 4-213668 (hereinafter "the '668 document").

Regarding the rejection of claims 5 and 25, it is respectfully submitted that claims 5 and 25 have been amended hereby, as required by the Office Action. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 5 and 25 is respectfully requested.

Regarding the rejection of claims 1-5 and 15, it is respectfully submitted that the '668 document does not disclose or suggest a plurality of support members with each support member directly attached to one of a plurality of respective vertical steel columns of a structure under construction, as recited in independent claim 1. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the '668 document does not disclose or suggest a plurality of first support members with each first support member directly mounted to one of a plurality of respective vertical steel columns of a structure under construction, as recited in amended independent claim 15.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claims 1 and 15, and the claims depending

56139998-2

therefrom, are patentable over the cited reference. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-5 and 15 is respectfully requested.

This communication is believed to be fully responsive to the Office Action, and every effort has been made to place the present application in condition for allowance.

If an additional telephone interview would be of assistance in advancing prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided below.

If any additional fee is due in connection with the present response, the Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge the requisite fee to our deposit account number 02-0393.

Favorable reconsideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 

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- 17 -

NYCDMS/982134.2